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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1630

UNCLAS HARARE 000567

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OTRA SF ZI

SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR RITA BYRNES

REF: STATE 85963

¶1. Embassy Harare grants country clearance and warmly welcomes the visit of Rita Byrnes to assist Embassy Harare Political/Econ section from July 2 to August 19, ¶2007. Embassy acknowledges that Ms. Byrnes holds a top secret clearance.

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¶2. The Embassy has arranged TDY housing accommodations and transportation for the duration of her stay in Harare.

¶3. Based on the current economic situation in the country, using a credit card could significantly increase your costs. Hotel payment must be made in U.S. cash or travelers checks. U.S. travelers checks are difficult to use except to pay hotel bills. Personal checks may be cashed at the Embassy cashier only for local currency and at the official exchange rate. Personal checks cannot be cashed at the Embassy for U.S. currency. Post recommends that travelers bring enough U.S. currency to cover anticipated needs in Zimbabwe.

¶4. Control Officer for the visit will be Political/Econ OMS Lynn Lykins who can be reached during work hours at 263-3-250-593 extension 205; home at 263-4-496-826; and cell phone at 263-011 876-096; or via email at Lykinslt@state.gov An Embassy driver will meet and assist at the airport.

¶5. Post strongly urges leaving Embassy Harare's telephone number with family and business associates before departing for Zimbabwe so that you can be quickly located in the event of an emergency. The Embassy telephone number is 263-4-250-593. Marine Security Guard Post extension is ¶260.

¶6. Several recent visitors transiting Johannesburg to Harare have had items stolen from their luggage at Johannesburg International Airport. Please ensure that your luggage is locked and hand-carry valuable items.

¶7. Malaria is prevalent throughout Zimbabwe, except in Harare. We strongly recommend the use of malaria prophylaxes and adjunctive measures when traveling outside of Harare.

¶8. The exchange rate is currently \$100,000 Zim dollars to US \$1, however this rate is subject to frequent change.

¶9. There is a non-waivable USD 30.00 per person departure tax, payable at the airport upon leaving Zimbabwe in exact change only. (Note: the Zimbabwean Government recently began levying a USD 30.00 fee for US visitors in Zimbabwe, but airport authorities have been instructed to waive this fee for travelers with US diplomatic and official passports. End note.)

¶10. Harare is designated a high crime post by the Department of State. The Regional Security Officer (RSO) is required to brief all TDY visitors staying more than one week as soon as possible after their arrival at post. While Harare is a clean and pleasant city, street crime is a serious problem, particularly in tourist areas. Visitors have found it safer not to carry valuables, but rather to store them in hotel safety deposit boxes or safe rooms. Walking alone or at night downtown is not recommended as attacks have taken place on public streets and parks. The RSO recommends leaving all important documents (passports, plane tickets, etc.) in a hotel safe, and not wearing any jewelry on the street. In addition, visitors should avoid hanging a camera around their necks, carrying a protruding wallet, and carry or showing large amounts of money in public. We urge visitors to use the same security precautions they would exercise in any urban area. Avoid any large gatherings, demonstrations or political rallies in both rural and urban areas. Occupied farms are also to be avoided at all times.

¶11. Road safety/automobile travel: While traveling in vehicles, doors should be kept locked and windows rolled up. Car-jackings are common in Harare, and diplomatic vehicles and personnel are not immune to these attacks by armed thieves. Highway bandits are active on roads leading to border areas.

¶12. As per Secstate 286036, TDYers must coordinate the transport of official unclassified portable computers that will be used within the USG controlled access facilities with the RSO and ISSO.

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